

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-25

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P 031725Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1612

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SANTIAGO 0049

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, OVIP, CI

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT PINOCHET

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT PINOCHET WARMLY WELCOMES SECRETARY'S VISIT; REQUESTS U.S. SUPPORT FOR PARIS CLUB DEBT RENEGOTIATIONS; HOPES U.S. CAN FIND WAY TO HELP WITH MILITARY ASSISTANCE; AND ASSERTS CENTERPIECE OF GOC POLICY IS FRIENDSHIP WITH U.S.
END SUMMARY

2. I CALLED ON PRESIDENT PINOCHET JANUARY 3 TO SOLICIT ANY VIEWS HE MIGHT WISH TO EXPRESS IN ADVANCE OF MY DEPARTURE FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE COM CONFERENCE AND CONSULTATION IN WASHINGTON. FOREIGN MINISTER CARVAJAL AND DCM WERE ALSO PRESENT.

3. SECRETARY'S VISIT: PRESIDENT PINOCHET BEGAN BY EXPRESSING HIS GENUINE PLEASURE AT THE PROSPECT OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S VISIT, ASSERTING THAT IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL. HE NOTED THAT THE GOC WOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPOSE THE SECRETARY TO THE SAME VIEWS WHICH HAD BEEN EXPRESSED TO MEMBERS OF HIS POLICY PLANNING STAFF DURING THEIR OCTOBER VISIT HERE. IN ADDITION, THE SECRETARY WOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO OBSERVE FOR HIMSELF THE REALITY OF THE CHILEAN SITUATION, SO DIFFERENT FROM THE IMAGE WHICH HAS BEEN CREATED ABROAD. HE THOUGHT THIS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT IN THE AREA OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THE SECRETARY WOULD BE ABLE TO SEE FOR HIMSELF THAT THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT RESPECTS HUMAN RIGHTS. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE WOULD
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NOT CONTEND THAT ABUSES HAVE NOT OCCURRED OR THAT THEY DO NOT

STILL OCCUR ON OCCASION, BUT THE FACT IS THAT A MILITARY OFFICER IS SERVING A PRISON TERM AS RESULT OF SUCH TRANSGRESSIONS AND THERE IS NO QUESTION BUT THAT ABUSES ARE RAPIDLY DECLINING.

4. THE SECRETARY WOULD APPRECIATE THAT CHILE HAS SPECIAL PROBLEMS. IT IS CLEARLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE GOC TO HANDLE THE JURIDICAL ASPECT OF ARMED TERRORISM OTHER THAN BY MEANS OF MILITARY TRIBUNALS, SINCE THE CIVILIAN COURTS OF ORDINARY JUSTICE HAVE NO BODY OF STATUTE LAW ENVISAGING SUCH OFFENSES. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE HAD BEEN HOLDING DISCUSSIONS WITH THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE WITH A VIEW TO ATTEMPTING TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN VIOLENT ACTS AND SUCH OFFENSES AS DISTRIBUTION OF PROPAGANDA, REMANDING PERPETRATORS OF THE LATTER OFFENSES TO CIVILIAN COURTS. I AGREED THAT A SHARPER DISTINCTION BETWEEN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AND OTHER OFFENSES COULD BE HELPFUL.

5. THE PRESIDENT NOTED THAT OFFICIAL GOC PROPOSALS FOR THE RELEASE OF 200 PRISONERS TO MEXICO WERE BEING CARRIED FORWARD IN SUCH A WAY THAT PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SAY THAT HE HAD NO OFFICIAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE GOC OFFER. PRESIDENT PINOCHET SAID HE HOPED SOON TO BE ABLE TO DELIVER THE 200 PRISONERS, "WITH LAURA ALLENDE AT THEIR HEAD," TO MEXICO.

6. I SAID THAT AS OF NOW THE TENTATIVE DATE FOR THE SECRETARY'S VISIT REMAINED FEBRUARY 18, BUT THAT THIS OF COURSE DEPENDED UPON AGREEMENT WITH OTHER COUNTRIES TO BE VISITED WITH REGARD TO PROPOSED DATES. I SAID WE WOULD BE IN TOUCH FURTHER WITH THE GOC AS SOON AS MORE DEFINITE WORD WAS AVAILABLE.

7. THE FOREIGN MINISTER ASKED THAT I DETERMINE THE SUBJECTS THE SECRETARY WOULD LIKE TO COVER IN ORDER THAT THE GOC MIGHT BE FULLY RESPONSIVE TO HIS INTERESTS. HE SAID HE ASSUMED THAT THE SECRETARY WOULD WISH TO HAVE GOC VIEWS ON SUBJECTS ON THE AGENDA FOR THE BUENOS AIRES MFM. I SAID I WOULD SEEK TO DETERMINE THE SECRETARY'S INTERESTS AND INFORM HIM. I SAID I SHARED HIS ASSUMPTION AND FURTHER ASSUMED THAT THE SECRETARY WOULD WISH TO HAVE CHILEAN VIEWS ON BILATERAL MATTERS AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE WHICH POSES SUCH PROBLEMS FOR US.
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8. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: PRESIDENT PINOCHET SAID THE GOC VERY MUCH NEEDS U.S. SUPPORT IN THE NEXT ROUND OF PARIS CLUB DEBT RENEGOTIATIONS. HE NOTED THAT FALLING COPPER PRICES HAVE POSED A SERIOUS BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEM TO THE GOC AND THAT DEBT RELIEF IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE GOC TO MANAGE THE SITUATION. I SAID I WAS HOPEFUL THAT WE COULD BE OF ASSISTANCE IN THIS REGARD, AS WE HAD BEEN LAST YEAR.

9. PRESIDENT PINOCHET ALSO EXPRESSED HIS STRONG DESIRE THAT THE USG AVOID PLACING ANY OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF POTENTIAL U.S. INVESTORS IN CHILE.

10. I SAID THAT FAR FROM IMPEDING U.S. INVESTMENT IN CHILE, WE HAD HOPED TO SEE IT REVIVE. WE HAD BEGUN SOME PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS WITH CHILEAN AUTHORITIES ABOUT RENEWED OPIC OPERATIONS HERE WHICH MIGHT SERVE AS A FURTHER INCENTIVE TO POTENTIAL U.S. INVESTORS. I SAID THAT I WOULD BE CONSIDERING WITH MY COLLEAGUES IN WASHINGTON OTHER POSSIBLE WAYS IN WHICH WE MIGHT BE OF ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITIES OF GUARANTEES FOR LOW-COST HOUSING PROGRAM AND EX-IM BANK ACTIVITIES.

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P 031725Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1613

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SANTIAGO 0049

EXDIS

11. MILITARY ASSISTANCE: THE PRESIDENT SAID HE COULD NOT FAIL TO MENTION GOC INTEREST IN U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE, NOTING THAT THE GOC REMAINED HOPEFUL THAT WE WOULD FIND A WAY TO HELP. I SAID THAT BOTH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND THE EMBASSY HAD EXERTED EVERY EFFORT TO ASSIST CHILE IN THIS AREA. THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, FROM PRESIDENT FORD DOWN, HAD CONSISTENTLY OPPOSED RESTRICTIVE LEGISLATION WITH REGARD TO CHILE. I READ AND LEFT WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER, PRESIDENT FORD'S DECEMBER 30 COMMENT ON AID TO CHILE IN HIS STATEMENT UPON SIGNING THE FAA OF 1974, NOTING THAT I HAD SEEN NOTHING OF THIS STATEMENT IN THE LOCAL PRESS. THE PRESIDENT GRIMACED AT THE PART OF THE STATEMENT IN WHICH PRESIDENT FORD INDICATED HE SHARED CONGRESSIONAL CONCERN ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION, BUT SEEMED TO TAKE MY POINT ABOUT PRESIDENTIAL OPPOSITION TO

THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE CUT-OFF FOR CHILE.

12. I ALSO REMINDED THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECRETARY'S CONVERSATION WITH CHILEAN CHARGE GUZMAN IN WHICH THE SECRETARY SAID WE WOULD WORK TO CHANGE THE RESTRICTIVE LEGISLATION, IN THE NEW CONGRESS. HOWEVER, I OBSERVED THAT THIS WOULD INEVITABLY REQUIRE SOME MONTHS. PRESIDENT PINOCHET ACKNOWLEDGED THAT DELAY WOULD BE INEVITABLE AND ASSERTED HE THOUGHT THE NEW CONGRESS WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT THAN THE OLD ONE. I SAID THAT MIGHT BE TRUE, BUT OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES MIGHT ALSO CHANGE IN THE INTERIM. I ALSO NOTED THAT WE WERE EXAMINING CAREFULLY HOW MUCH LEEWAY THE RESTRICTIVE LEGISLATION LEFT US WITH REGARD TO MILITARY TRAINING, AND WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH CHILEAN MILITARY LEADERS. PRESIDENT PINOCHET REMINDED ME AGAIN THAT
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DURING THE ALLENDE GOVERNMENT HE HAD MADE CLEAR TO MY PREDECESSOR, TO GENERAL UNDERWOOD, USCINCSO, AND TO GENERAL MAYBRY, USARSO, THE CHILEAN ARMY'S UNWILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT SOVIET ARMS EVEN AT THE BARGAIN PRICES AND FAVORABLE CREDIT TERMS THEN BEING OFFERED. HE REMARKED THAT CHILE WAS NOW PAYING THE PRICE OF HAVING ASSUMED THAT POSITION.

13. GOC POLICY: GENERAL PINOCHET CONCLUDED BY SAYING THE UNITED STATES WILL ONE DAY UNDERSTAND THAT CHILE IS A TRUE FRIEND, PROBABLY THE BEST, AND PERHAPS THE ONLY TRUE FRIEND IN THE HEMISPHERE. EVEN THOUGH CHILE IS A BETTER FRIEND OF THE UNITED STATES THAN THE U.S. IS OF CHILE, FRIENDSHIP WITH THE U.S. CONTINUES TO BE A CENTERPIECE OF GOC POLICY. "IN OUR CASE," HE SAID, "THAT HAS ALWAYS BEEN TRUE, AND IT IS TOO LATE TO CHANGE NOWM"
POPPER

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